

12/11/01

FACT SHEET

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO REDUCE TOXIC AIR EMISSIONS FROM PHOSPHORIC ACID MANUFACTURING PLANTS AND PHOSPHATE FERTILIZERS PRODUCTION PLANTS

TODAY'S ACTION

- ! The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to amend its toxic air pollutant rules for phosphoric acid manufacturing plants and phosphate fertilizers production plants. The amendments would resolve issues and questions raised by industry after the original rules were issued.
- ! Toxic air pollutants, also known as air toxics, are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer and other serious health or environmental effects.
- ! Most of the phosphoric acid produced by these facilities is used in the production of phosphate-based fertilizers that are used for agricultural purposes. A variety of air toxics, including hydrogen fluoride and several metals, are emitted during the manufacture of those fertilizers. Exposure to these compounds has been demonstrated to cause health problems.
- ! Today's amendments would not change the health and environmental benefits of the final rules. These amendments are technical corrections and clarifications of the final rules. They will result in the use of the same control equipment required by the original rule.

BACKGROUND

- ! The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, require EPA to regulate emissions of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. On July 16, 1992, EPA published a list of industrial source categories that emit one or more of these air toxics. For listed categories of "major" sources (those that emit 10 tons/year or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons/year or more of a combination of pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that require the application of stringent air pollution reduction measures known as maximum achievable control technology.
- ! EPA identified phosphoric acid manufacturing plants and phosphate fertilizers production plants industrial sources emitting one or more toxic air pollutants. EPA issued its final air toxics rules for phosphoric acid manufacturing plants and phosphate fertilizers production plants on June 10, 1999. Those final rules required the application of maximum achievable control technology for

approximately 21 facilities manufacturing phosphoric acid and phosphate fertilizers.

- ! The final rules are expected to reduce air toxics emissions, primarily hydrogen fluoride, by approximately 345 tons annually -- a 57 percent reduction from current emissions. The final rules also will reduce emissions of total fluorides, which are known to have adverse effects on the environment, including damage to vegetation. In addition, the final rules will yield small reductions in emissions of heavy metals, including chromium and lead, and will reduce emissions of the volatile organic compound methyl isobutyl ketone.

WHAT THE AMENDMENTS WOULD DO

- ! The amendments to the final rules would revise the emissions limit for phosphate rock calciners, which are used to remove moisture and organic matter from phosphate rock, based on new emissions and operating data.
- ! The amendments also include technical corrections and clarifications of monitoring requirements to ensure that emission limits are achieved on a continuous basis.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ! To download the amendments from EPA's page on the World Wide Web, go to <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>. For additional information, contact Tanya Medley of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5422 or by e-mail at medley.tanya@epa.gov.
- ! The EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's home page on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues. The address is: <http://www.epa.gov/oar/>.